

Dear Commissioners:

Stop hidden phone fees so I can truly compare prices of phone services. I support the petition filed by the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates and endorsed by other consumer advocacy organizations. CG Docket No. 04-208, Petition for Declaratory Ruling Regarding Truth-In-Billing and Billing Format, is long overdue.

Phone bills should be truthful and easy to understand. \$8.61 charge for dial tone?!??? FCC line charge??? number portability??? Federal USF surcharge? Federal Tax, NY state/local sales tax? Adds up to \$18.55 without making a single call. And then we come to 'long distance summary..further fed and local taxes,'gross receipts tax surcharge, metropolitan transit auth. surcharge. there was a time when the federal taxes were 'temporary', years of temporary???? to call the billing office requires going thru a recording with press 1, press 2, press 3 until a live voice responds. there once was a local office with live people who could explain the bill, provide directories, etc. it's obvious that recordings are cheaper than employees with a knowledge of how and why charges are made. hiring a few literate individuals to make the bills understandable. too late! the secret is out....recordings work cheaper.

Because this practice is tolerated by the FCC, long distance and wireless phone companies are able to hide the true cost of service. These add-ons make the advertised price of service significantly less than the amount of the check I have to write each month to pay the bill. Competition will not work if consumers cannot accurately compare prices when shopping for service.

Many states are stepping up to address this problem. They should be allowed to proceed. However, the FCC shouldn't shirk its responsibility, nor limit states from doing more.

The FCC should immediately grant the NASUCA petition to investigate billing practices, and prohibit phone and wireless companies from imposing separate monthly fees, line items or surcharges unless expressly mandated by law or the charge is expressly authorized by a governmental authority.